



MS | RISK

West Africa Report

Security and Piracy - At Sea - On Land - Domestic News and Developments
for the International Resources Sector

August 18 - 31, 2014

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 - Crisis management
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24 hr Contact Information:

Email: operations@msrisk.com
Telephone: +44 207 754 3555

Summary

August 18 - 31, 2014



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Sahel Region

Regional Reporting

- **29 August 2014** – The World Food Programme (WFP) is planning to boost its emergency aid in West Africa, indicating that the region is now facing a “tsunami” of need that has been caused by the current Ebola outbreak.
 - The WHO indicated Friday that this past week has seen the highest increase of Ebola cases since the outbreak began, noting that this new data offers more evidence that the crisis is worsening.
- **28 August 2014** – On Thursday, Ebola-hit nations met for crisis talks as the World Health Organization (WHO) warned that the number of cases could exceed 20,000 before the outbreak is stemmed.

- According to new figures released by the WHO, as of August 26, 1,552 people have died from the virus in four countries, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone, while 3,062 people have been infected.
- **27 August 2014** – The United Nations Security Council has requested that African countries in the Sahel region set up regional patrols in a bid to protect their borders from organized crime and terrorist groups.
 - On Wednesday, Air France became the latest carrier to announce a suspension of its services to Sierra Leone, while British Airways announced that it has stopped its flights to Freetown and Monrovia until early next year.
- **21 August 2014** – David Nabarro, a British physician appointed by the United Nations last week and tasked with coordinating the global response to the Ebola crisis, warned Friday that officials in Africa should prepare for a possible flare-up of the epidemic in West Africa.
- **21 August 2014** - On Thursday, South Africa became the latest country to issue a ban on non-citizens travelling from the three West African countries that have been affected by the worst Ebola outbreak.

International Developments

- **27 August 2014** – Air France confirmed Wednesday that it will suspend its flights to Sierra Leone beginning on 28 August.
- **19 August 2014** - On Monday the World Health Organization (WHO) called for exit screenings on all travellers from the affected countries.

Benin

- **24 August 2014** – A meeting of African health ministers, which was scheduled to occur in Benin in early September, has been postponed because of the current Ebola epidemic in West Africa.

Burkina Faso

- **24 August 2014** – On Saturday, tens of thousands of people marched in Burkina Faso's capital city to protest against any move by the president to extend his decades-hold on power.

Ghana

- **29 August 2014** – A statement released by the Ghanaian presidency has disclosed that the United Nations will use Ghana as a base for supplies that are bound to those countries currently affected by the Ebola crisis.
- **22 August 2014** – Since June, a cholera outbreak in Ghana has killed at least 67 people and infected more than 5,000 in an outbreak that has highlighted the health and sanitation challenges faced by one of Africa's fastest-growing economies.

Guinea

- **30 August 2014** – Guinea's local government reported Saturday that clashes between protesters and security forces in a Guinean city at the epicenter of the West African Ebola outbreak have left at least 55 wounded.
- **28 August 2014** – Riots broke out in Guinea's second-largest city Nzerekore after rumors spread that health workers had infected people with the deadly Ebola virus.

Guinea

- **30 August 2014** – On Saturday, Guinea-Bissau launched a nationwide hygiene drive, declaring the country “on alert” after neighboring Senegal announced that the deadly Ebola virus had been confirmed in the country.

Ivory Coast

- **23 August 2014** – The Ivory Coast's Prime Minister confirmed Saturday that the country has closed its borders with Ebola-hit Guinea and Liberia in a bid to protect citizens against the spread of the epidemic, which has killed 1,427 people across West Africa.

Liberia

On the Ground Reporting

- **29 August 2014** – Officials in Liberia disclosed Friday that they will open up a neighborhood in the capital city where thousands of people were barricaded in a bid to contain the spread of the Ebola virus.
- **22 August 2014** - On Friday, officials in Liberia confirmed that the Ebola virus has now affected every region in the country.
- **21 August 2014** – On Thursday, calm returned to a neighbourhood in Liberia's capital city after clashes erupted between residents and security forces on Wednesday.
- **20 August 2014** - In a bid to stem the Ebola epidemic, Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf imposed a nighttime curfew, which is set to begin Wednesday evening.
- **18 August 2014** - Despite earlier denials, Liberia's government confirmed Monday that seventeen suspected Ebola patients have gone missing after a health center in the capital city was attacked and looted over the weekend.

Domestic News

- **26 August 2014** – Liberia's president has fired a number of ministers and senior government officials after they defied an order to return to the West African country in order to lead the fight against the deadly Ebola outbreak.

Mali

On the Ground Reporting

- **30 August 2014** – Algeria's foreign ministry announced Saturday that two Algerian diplomats kidnapped in Mali in April 2012 by the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) were freed on Saturday.
- **29 August 2014** – Suspected armed Islamist militants fired rockets at a camp of the UN mission in the northern region of Mali on Friday.
- **25 August 2014** – On Monday, campaigners condemned Mali's decision to release a judge accused of being a key figure in the 2012 Islamist militant occupation of the country's northern desert region.

International Developments

- **21 August 2014** – Officials at Amnesty International disclosed Thursday that minors, suspected of working as child soldiers for rebel groups in Mali, are now being left to languish in adult prisons in violation of their human rights.

Mauritania

- **21 August 2014** – According to a presidential decree released Thursday, Mauritania's newly re-elected President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz has named a former senior official with the West African nation's state-owned mining and construction companies as the country's new prime minister.

Niger

- **28 August 2014** – According to an opposition official, Niger's head of parliament, who is currently facing questions in a probe into international baby-trafficking, has "discreetly" left the country for Burkina Faso.
- **23 August 2014** – On Saturday, Niger's agriculture minister was remanded in custody in what his aides have stated is a politically charged probe into suspected baby-trafficking from neighboring Nigeria.

Nigeria

On the Ground Reporting

- **30 August 2014** – According to witnesses, Boko Haram gunmen have killed scores of residents in a Nigerian town on the border with Cameroon that was recently captured by the militant group.
- **29 August 2014** – Some 160 people are currently being medically monitored in Nigeria's oil-producing hub Port Harcourt after a doctor died from the virus.
- **28 August 2014** – Officials in Nigeria confirmed Thursday that a doctor has died from Ebola in the southeastern oil city of Port Harcourt.
- **27 August 2014** – Nigeria's president has ordered that all schools in the country remain closed as part of measures currently being implemented in order to prevent the further spread of the deadly Ebola virus.
 - Nigeria's health minister on Wednesday warned against complacency in the country's fight against Ebola.
- **26 August 2014** – On Tuesday, Boko Haram militants attempted to blow up a bridge on the Nigerian border with Cameroon after overrunning a town and sending residents and soldiers fleeing.
 - Reports have emerged that Boko Haram militants have seized control of a Nigerian town after soldiers deployed there fled to take refuge across the border in nearby Cameroon.
 - Meanwhile Nigeria's defense headquarters disclosed Tuesday that Nigerian government soldiers, who witnesses reported fleeing into neighboring Cameroon during a clash with a large number of Boko Haram militants, have handed over their weapons to Cameroonian authorities and are on their way back to Nigeria.
- **25 August 2014** – On Monday, thousands of people fled across the border into Cameroon after Boko Haram attacked a border town in northeastern Nigeria.
- **24 August 2014** – In a new video made public on Sunday, Boko Haram's leader has claimed to have created an Islamic caliphate in a northeastern Nigerian town that was seized by the militant group earlier this month.
 - Striking public sector doctors in Nigeria confirmed Sunday that they will suspend a nearly two-month strike in order to help combat the Ebola outbreak.

- **23 August 2014** – On Saturday, a spokesman confirmed that thirty-five Nigerian police officers deployed to a training academy in the remote northeastern region of the country are missing after Boko Haram militants launched an attack on the facility earlier in the week.
 - A local government official in Adamawa disclosed that scores of gunmen stormed the town of Madagali on Saturday, forcing out soldiers and taking over government buildings.
- **22 August 2014** – On Friday, Nigerian officials confirmed that two more people had tested positive for Ebola, bringing the total number of confirmed cases of the deadly virus in the country to 14, including five deaths.
- **21 August 2014** – Witnesses and local officials reported Thursday that Boko Haram militants have seized control of a town in northeastern Nigeria in what appears to be the latest bid by the militant group to expand its control over territory in the crisis-hit region.
- **20 August 2014** – Dozens of Nigerian soldiers have refused to deploy for an upcoming offensive against Boko Haram militants, stating that they will not adhere to military orders until they receive better equipment and weaponry.
- **19 August 2014** – Nigeria's Health Minister Onyebuchi Chukwu confirmed Tuesday that a senior doctor, who treated Nigeria's first Ebola patient, has died, bringing the death toll in Africa's most populous country to five.
- **18 August 2014** – Witnesses reported Monday that suspected Boko Haram gunmen killed ten people who had fled their homes to escape attacks by the insurgents.

Senegal

- **29 August 2014** - Senegal on Friday confirmed the country's first Ebola case.
- **22 August 2014** – Despite the World Health Organization (WHO) indicating that travel bans do not work, especially if they prevent doctors from helping tackle the crisis, Senegal has become the latest country to seal its border with a West African neighbor in a bid to ward off the deadly Ebola virus.

Sierra Leone

On the Ground Reporting

- **20 August 2014** – The Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone, which has left hundreds dead in the country, reportedly began with just one healer's claims to special powers.

Domestic News

- **29 August 2014** – Sierra Leone's President Ernest Bai Koroma dismissed his Health Minister Miatta Kargbo on Friday over her handling of the Ebola epidemic, which has killed more than 400 people in the West African country.
- **22 August 2014** – On Friday, Sierra Leone passed a law that will effectively see anyone harboring a victim of Ebola face a two-year jail term.

International Developments

- **26 August 2014** – On Tuesday, the UN warned of a looming food crisis in eastern Sierra Leone, which remains on lockdown since the country's government announced a state of emergency.

Security Summaries for West African States

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There is no travel advisory for Gambia, however MS Risk advises all travellers to avoid travel by road from The Gambia to the Casamance, in the southern region of Senegal. The Casamance region of south western Senegal remains affected by incidents involving presumed separatist groups and by incidents of banditry. An outbreak of the Ebola virus has been confirmed in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. While there have been no confirmed cases of the virus in The Gambia, as part of efforts to prevent the deadly virus from spreading into the country, Gambia's Ministry of Health and Social Welfare has set up a task force to control the border areas. MS Risk is currently advising all travellers to the country to maintain a high level of vigilance. There is an underlying threat from terrorism. Travellers to the country are warned to remain vigilant as attacks can take place at anytime and anywhere.

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Togo

There is currently no travel advisory for Togo. Crime is on the rise in Lome. Local authorities warn of a rise in violent robberies and car-jacking incidents that target both foreigners and Togolese alike. Togolese authorities have also warned motorists to only stop for individuals in uniform, particularly after dark. You should avoid travelling alone where possible even within Lome city limits, especially after dark. There is a possibility of retaliatory attacks in Togo, due to its participation in the intervention in Mali.

Sahel Region

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

Avoid all but essential travel to part(s) of the country

Security Summary

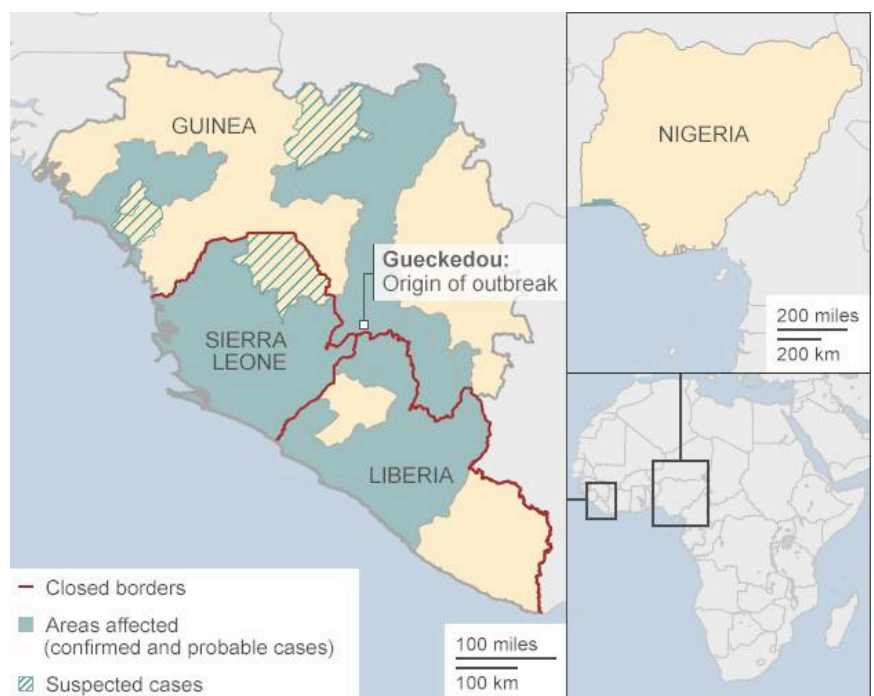
On 8 August the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Ebola outbreak a public health emergency of international concern. The current Ebola outbreak affects Nigeria, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Some airlines have suspended flights to the affected countries due to the deteriorating public health situation. MS Risk advises all to carefully assess your need to travel to these countries. If you do decide to travel, we advise that you make sure you have adequate arrangements in place for onward travel/exit and have adequate emergency health provisions.

There is a very real threat of kidnap to westerners in the Sahel and surrounding regions. The Sahel region includes Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania and Niger, however the kidnap threat extends to other countries, including Algeria, Cameroon, Libya and Nigeria. Following the military intervention in Mali, which was launched in January 2013, the threat of kidnap and terrorist attacks has increased, with further attacks highly likely to continue.

There are currently around six hostages being held in the Sahel and surrounding regions. Victims in the region have included construction workers, NGO workers, tourists and diplomats of various nationalities, primarily European. Some hostages have been killed.

Regional Reporting

- **29 August 2014** – The World Food Programme (WFP) is planning to boost its emergency aid in West Africa, indicating that the region is now facing a “tsunami” of need that has been caused by the current Ebola outbreak. Speaking in Dakar after returning from Liberia and Sierra Leone, the countries most



affected by the outbreak, Denise Brown, the WFP's regional director for West Africa, indicated that there was a "need to scale up" to ensure that materials, body bags, and food were reaching those most in need, noting "what we saw when we were there is that the health structures are massively overwhelmed." The regional director also disclosed that the WFP has "never responded in this scale to this kind of crisis" before, with the added complication that many areas, such as the vast West Point neighborhood in Liberia's capital Monrovia, are quarantined, effectively cutting off access to food. According to the latest data released by the WHO on Thursday, there has been another rise in new cases and fatalities, with more than 1,500 people now believed to have died. The figures also indicate that 3,062 people have caught the deadly form of hemorrhagic fever to date, with the WHO now warning that the number of cases could exceed 20,000 before the outbreak is stemmed.

- The WHO indicated Friday that this past week has seen the highest increase of Ebola cases since the outbreak began, noting that this new data offers more evidence that the crisis is worsening. In a detailed report on the outbreak released Friday, the WHO disclosed that more than 500 cases were recorded over the past week, by far the worst toll of any week so far. According to the new data, the vast majority of the cases were reported in Liberia however the agency noted that it was also the highest number of cases in one week for Guinea and Sierra Leone. Nigeria also recorded a small number of cases. According to officials at the WHO, "there are serious problems with case management and infection, prevention and control," noting that the "situation is worsening in Liberia and Sierra Leone," as neither of those countries has enough space in treatment centers to handle the tremendous and increasing number of cases. The region where the three most affected countries meet remains the epicenter of the outbreak, as nearly two-thirds of all cases have been reported in the area. The recent spread of the virus into densely populated cities is also now causing concern, with Monrovia, Liberia's capital city, particularly being hit hard. The new data comes just one day after the UN health agency warned that the outbreak in West Africa was accelerating, and that it could eventually infect as many as 20,000 people. So far, it has killed more than 1,500 of the 3,000 people it has infected in Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. The UN health agency also disclosed Thursday that it assumes that in many of the hard-hit areas, the actual number of cases may be two to four times higher than is currently being reported.
- **28 August 2014** – On Thursday, Ebola-hit nations met for crisis talks as the World Health Organization (WHO) warned that the number of cases could exceed 20,000 before the outbreak is stemmed. Health ministers from member states of the West African regional bloc ECOWAS met in the Ghanaian capital, Accra, on Thursday in order to discuss how to strengthen its response to the outbreak. ECOWAS has warned that Ebola remains "a threat to regional and global public health safety as well as the economic and social security of the affected countries." The regional bloc has backed the WHO's call for flight bans to be ended and has called on regional states to reopen their borders in order to make it easier for health workers to access the affected areas. At the meeting, Nigeria's health minister Onyebuchi Chukwu confirmed that the country had recorded its six death from the virus. A doctor died in the southeastern city of Port Harcourt on August 22, a day after treating a patient who had contact



with the Liberian-American man who brought the virus to Nigeria and who died in a Lagos hospital on July 25. The confirmation of the death, and the fact that it occurred outside of Lagos, indicates that Nigeria has not yet contained the virus.

- According to new figures released by the WHO, as of August 26, 1,552 people have died from the virus in four countries, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone, while 3,062 people have been infected. Although officials at the global health body disclosed Thursday that the organization is aiming to reverse the trend within three months, with the final aim of stopping “all residual transmission within 6 – 9 months,” many experts believe that at the current rate, this is an under-estimation and that the number of infections “could exceed 20,000...”
- **27 August 2014** – The United Nations Security Council has requested that African countries in the Sahel region set up regional patrols in a bid to protect their borders from organized crime and terrorist groups. In a unanimously adopted statement, the Council expressed concern over the “alarming situation” in the region, adding that groups such as al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Nigeria’s Boko Haram and Ansar Dine are impacting regional security. The Council has called on all countries in the region to “strengthen border security and consider establishing special units to undertake regional patrols, to effectively constrain the spread of transitional threats in the region.” While Chadian Ambassador Cherif Mahamat Zene disclosed that countries were currently examining the proposal, he warned that they would not be able to carry out such regional patrols on a long-term basis. Despite originating in Algeria, AQIM fighters were key players in the insurgency in northern Mali. Similarly, while Boko Haram militants initially concentrated their attacks on northeastern Nigeria, in recent months, the militant group’s fighters have staged attacks in neighboring Cameroon, a development that has highlighted the cross-border reach of the armed group.
 - On Wednesday, Air France became the latest carrier to announce a suspension of its services to Sierra Leone, while British Airways announced that it has stopped its flights to Freetown and Monrovia until early next year. Currently, Royal Air Morocco remains to be the only airline that provides a regular service to both capitals however the company has disclosed that flights were only about 10 percent full from Casablanca. The United Nations’ envoy on Ebola, David Nabarro, has criticized airlines for suspending flights to the affected region, warning that Ebola-hit countries faced increasing isolation, which would effectively make it more difficult for the UN to carry out its work in combatting the deadly virus.
- **21 August 2014** – David Nabarro, a British physician appointed by the United Nations last week and tasked with coordinating the global response to the Ebola crisis, warned Friday that officials in Africa should prepare for a possible flare-up of the epidemic in West Africa. Speaking to reporters during a stopover in Conakry airport, while en route to Monrovia, Dr Nabarro disclosed that it is difficult to indicate whether the Ebola crisis will soon come to an end, noting “we’re either close to a plateau, but then we’ll drop, or we’re in a phase, an infection point, where it is going to increase, and I absolutely cannot tell.” The British physician further indicated that he is now determined to “ensure that every piece of our apparatus is at its optimum so it could deal possibly with a flare-up if that’s necessary.” Dr. Nabarro, who is tasked with revitalizing the health sectors of the Ebola-hit countries, is due to visit Freetown, Conakry and Abuja in Nigeria. Efforts to control the spread of the virus have been hampered by the deaths of several top health officials and numerous frontline doctors to the virus.
- **21 August 2014** - On Thursday, South Africa became the latest country to issue a ban on non-citizens travelling from the three West African countries that have been affected by the worst Ebola outbreak. A statement released by the health ministry declared “a total travel ban for all non-citizens travelling from

these high risk countries," which refers to Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The statement added that all South Africans returning home from these areas will undergo strict screenings. Government officials have also barred non-essential travel to the three countries. Despite having two scares in recent weeks, after a South African man returning from Liberia and a Guinean woman displayed Ebola-like symptoms, South Africa has so far been Ebola-free as both patients tested negative the deadly virus. Precautions are now being taken as Johannesburg is a major hub for air travel between southern Africa and the rest of the continent.

International Developments

- **27 August 2014** – Air France confirmed Wednesday that it will suspend its flights to Sierra Leone beginning on 28 August. The French flag carrier announced the “temporary suspension” of its flight to Freetown, which runs three times a week, however the airline has insisted that it will continue to serve Guinea and Nigeria, both countries that have been affected by the Ebola outbreak. Wednesday’s announcement came shortly after the French government advised to halt flights to Sierra Leone’s capital Freetown because of “the way the epidemic has evolved and the condition of the health systems.” It also comes just one day after British Airways confirmed that it was suspending flights to Liberia and Sierra Leone until next year. While many see the suspension of flights and closing of borders as a necessary move aimed at preventing any further spread of the Ebola virus, the WHO has on numerous occasions disclosed that such moves only further isolate Ebola-hit countries, noting that by isolating these countries, it is more difficult for health workers to treat those infected.
- **19 August 2014** - On Monday the World Health Organization (WHO) called for exit screenings on all travellers from the affected countries. A statement released by the WHO indicated that officials now want health checks to be carried out at all airports, sea ports and major land crossings of the four countries affected by the current Ebola outbreak. New data released by the WHO on Friday indicated that the death toll has now risen to 1,145, with 2,127 cases reported in total. The outbreak is currently affecting Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

Benin

No Travel Restrictions



Security Summary

Although there is currently no travel advisory for Benin, MS Risk advises all travellers to the country to remain vigilant. There is currently an Ebola virus outbreak in Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. While Benin currently has no confirmed cases of the Ebola virus, MS Risk advises all travellers to remain cautious, including maintaining strict standards of hygiene and avoiding eating bush meat.

There is currently a low threat from terrorism. There have been incidents of mugging, personal assault and carjacking in Cotonou. Armed robberies have also been reported in other areas, most notably in those regions that border Nigeria.

On the Ground Reporting

- **24 August 2014** – A meeting of African health ministers, which was scheduled to occur in Benin in early September, has been postponed because of the current Ebola epidemic in West Africa. Benin was set to host the 64th session of the World Health Organization's (WHO) committee of African health ministers from September 1 – 5 however according to Benin's Foreign Minister Nassirou Arifari Bako, "this important meeting...has been postponed after consultations with WHO authorities," noting that the decision was made "to express full solidarity with the countries affected by Ebola." Delegations from more than forty African countries had been expected to attend the meeting. While Benin currently has no confirmed Ebola cases, the country sees a large inflow of commercial traffic on a day-to-day basis from Lagos, Nigeria, which has registered fourteen cases, including five deaths. The worst-ever outbreak of the deadly virus has killed more than 1,400 people in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone since the start of this year.

Burkina Faso

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

Avoid all but essential travel to part(s) of the country



Security Summary

Anyone traveling to, or residing in, Burkina Faso is urged to maintain a high level of security awareness at all times. While the political situation remains generally stable, since February 2011, there have been an increasing number of demonstrations.

There is currently an Ebola virus outbreak in Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. While there currently have been no confirmed cases of the Ebola virus in Burkina Faso, MS Risk advises all travellers to remain cautious, including maintaining strict standards of hygiene. As a precautionary measure, Burkina Faso's environmental ministry has banned all special hunting for bats, which is the main carrier of the deadly virus.

Threats and Concerns

There is a general threat from terrorism throughout the Sahel region. Although there are currently no known Islamist operatives in Burkina Faso, the country's shared border with Mali may enable such elements to gain access. Furthermore, such militants may have disguised themselves as refugees in an attempt to blend in and to cross the border without detection. The regional Islamist elements that could threaten Burkina Faso include: al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), Ansar al Dine, Ansar al Sharia and Boko Haram.

Kidnapping Threats

There is a heightened risk that terrorist groups, including al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJWA), may cross the northern borders from Mali and Niger into Burkina Faso in order



to carry out kidnaps. MS Risk therefore advises against all travel to the areas of Burkina Faso north of the town of Boulssa, which is 25 km north of the capital of Ouagadougou. We particularly advise against all travel to the regions that border Mali and Niger. Since 2008, over 25 Westerners have been kidnapped in the Sahel region, and a number of these hostages continue to be held. AQIM operates directly or through criminal gangs who carry out kidnappings on their behalf or pass on their kidnap victims in return for payment.

Crime

There is also a high risk of armed groups stopping vehicles (including public buses to rob them. Such incidents have occurred in various parts of the country, particularly at night. Therefore, all travel between towns by road at night is to be avoided, especially from Ouagadougou to Po where there is a heightened risk. This is especially severe on market days when bandits often target merchants with stock or cash en route to and from the urban areas.

MS RISK Guidance to Organisations in Burkina Faso:

Although the biggest concern at this time remains in the northern areas of the country, specifically along the porous Mali border and at the junction of the Niger border, the attack and kidnapping in Algeria has demonstrated that such attacks can occur at any place and at any time. In addition, the attack on BP in Algeria came just days after Islamists announced that they would retaliate against French interests in the region. Consequently, it is highly likely that more attacks will take place over the coming months.

There is an increased Burkinabe military presence in the north of the country and companies should review their respective security situations and consider the following:

- Location and safety of personnel
- Security controls, communications and contingency plans at static locations
- Work tempo implications
- Journey management systems in place and working
- Liaison with the military - use of military escorts, coordination between multiple assets, confirmation that military escorts are coordinated and competent for the task.
- Reviewing all crisis management contingencies including but not limited to the following:
 - Kidnap (for ransom or ideological purposes)
 - Medical emergency and evacuation cycle for northern area
 - Interdiction of road moves for personnel and any convoys
 - Loss of communications with remote locations - enhanced comms options, access to stores if replenishment is restricted or cut off.
- Media and public affairs contingency

Companies relying on police escorts in the northern region of the country should ensure that travel patterns do not become predictable. Varying routes is difficult due to the limited road networks; therefore, it is even more important to vary the types of vehicles used as well as the times of the journeys and to avoid travel patterns becoming widely known. This is especially critical given the current tensions along the Mali border and the impending ECOWAS operations. All companies linked to the World Bank/International Finance Cooperation should familiarize themselves with the IFC Voluntary Principles on the Use of Security Forces. This applies to military, police or private security services.

Finally, unconfirmed reports suggest there is an elevated banditry threat on the main routes south and east of the town of Fada N'Gourma en route to Pama and Diapala respectively. Road moves to these areas should be risk assessed and liaison with police should occur until the nature of the threats has been clarified. Companies with operations in the region are invited to report incidents to MS Risk to aid in assessing local conditions. Liaising with insurers to ensure appropriate

cover is in place to meet special risks where needed is also strongly advised.

On the Ground Reporting

- **24 August 2014** – On Saturday, tens of thousands of people marched in Burkina Faso's capital city to protest against any move by the president to extend his decades-hold on power. Organizers disclosed that more than 100,000 protesters took part in the rally in Ouagadougou in what they termed "record mobilization." Police officials however have not released any estimates. The rally, which is the latest in opposition to a possible extension of power, spanned several kilometers, with demonstrators marching towards the presidency. In recent months, President Blaise Compaore has hinted that he may seek a referendum on whether to change the constitution, which would effectively allow him to run for office in the 2015 presidential elections. This has sparked anger against the planned referendum on whether to modify the constitution, which currently limits the president to a maximum of two five-year terms in office. President Compaore seized power in an October 1987 coup and has remained in power since then. In 2005, constitutional limits were introduced and President Compaore is therefore coming to the end of his second five-year term. While he has hinted that the referendum may be held in December, no official decision has been made. Majority of the opposition to attempts to cling to power is driven by the youth of the country, where 60 percent of the 17-million population is under the age of 25. This has effectively meant that they have spent their entire lives under the leadership of one man and the current opposition demonstrates that many have had enough.

Ghana

No Travel Restrictions



Security Summary

An outbreak of the Ebola virus disease has been confirmed in Guinea, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Liberia. There currently are no confirmed Ebola cases in Ghana. In April, health officials confirmed that a girl suspected of having Ebola tested negative. MS Risk advises all travellers to Ghana to take the necessary precautions, including maintaining strict standards of hygiene and avoiding eating bush meat.

Although there is currently no travel advisory for Ghana, the country has seen an increase in violent robbery in 2013. Throughout 2014, there have been a number of cases of violent robberies involving foreign nationals who have been attacked and robbed while travelling in taxis after dark. There have also been incidents where an assailant has been concealed in the trunk of the taxi. Recently, a number of foreign nationals in Tamale have been attacked and robbed by machete wielding individuals. MS Risk advises all travellers to the Tamale area to travel by private car and to avoid walking on the roads, or using a motor scooter or bicycle after dark.

Most armed robberies occur at night however there have been some reports of such incidents occurring during daytime. A common tactic has been to deliberately cause a minor road traffic accident in order to force the targeted vehicle to stop. As a result of ongoing local Chieftancy and land disputes, isolated inter-ethnic violence and civil unrest can occur at any time, including in the Northern, Upper East and Volta regions. A dusk to dawn curfew has been put in place on the Hohoe community in the Volta region. This is due to communal clashes over the exhumation of the Chief Imam of Hohoe. If you are considering travelling to the Northern Region, MS Risk advises you to remain alert to the potential of new outbreaks of flooding which is common in the Upper West, Upper East and Northern Regions during the rainy season, which spans from March to November. We advise that you monitor the local weather reports and expect difficulties when travelling to affected areas during this season.

On the Ground Reporting

- **29 August 2014** – A statement released by the Ghanaian presidency has disclosed that the United Nations will use Ghana as a base for supplies that are bound to those countries currently affected by the Ebola crisis. Sources have disclosed that Ghana's President John Dramani Mahama has agreed to allow international agencies to use Ghana's capital city Accra as a base for air lifting supplies and personnel to affected countries. According to the statement, "using Accra as the logistics and coordination center would therefore open a vital corridor to get urgently needed supplies and health personnel into the affected countries and areas." Due to regular international commercial flights being suspended to the affected countries, it has been difficult for officials to send supplies. The UN and local authorities will work closely in order to put in place appropriate screening and prevention measures to avoid any adverse effects on

Ghana as a result of the international operations. The UN will also help review and strengthen Ghana's Ebola preparedness as steps are taken in order to prevent the virus from spreading to that country.

- **22 August 2014** – Since June, a cholera outbreak in Ghana has killed at least 67 people and infected more than 5,000 in an outbreak that has highlighted the health and sanitation challenges faced by one of Africa's fastest-growing economies. According to the Ghana Health Service (GHS), the outbreak is centered around a number of impoverished communities in urban areas in the south, however there have also been a few cases reported in rural parts of the north. GHS director for Greater Accra has disclosed that some 54 people have died in or near the capital city while around 300 people are now being infected daily with the highly contagious disease, effectively placing great pressure on local health facilities. Cholera is an acute diarrheal illness that is caused by bacteria, which can cause rapid dehydration and death. Its victims are frequently infected through the ingestion of water and food that has been contaminated by human feces. Ghana currently has recorded no cases of the Ebola virus, which, since March, has killed more than 1,400 people in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, as well as five people in Nigeria. While Ghana is politically stable, the country has faced an array of fiscal problems. Furthermore although President John Mahama's government prides itself on its progress towards meeting United Nations goals for poverty reduction, a portion of the country's population still faces a chronic lack of infrastructure and basic services.

Guinea

Avoid all but essential travel to part(s) of the country



Security Summary

MS Risk currently advises all but essential travel to Guinea, except for those who are involved in the direct response to the Ebola outbreak.

An outbreak of contagious hemorrhagic fever, which has been identified as the Ebola virus, has been confirmed in the Forest region of south-eastern Guinea and in the capital city. On 13 August 2014, President Alpha Conde declared that the deadly Ebola outbreak is now a health emergency. The announcement came after the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Ebola outbreak a public health emergency of international concern. Some airlines have suspended flights to the affected countries due to the deteriorating public health situation. MS Risk advises all to carefully assess your need to travel to Guinea. If you do decide to travel, we advise that you make sure you have adequate arrangements in place for onward travel/exit and have adequate emergency health provisions. Due to the Ebola outbreak, general medical facilities throughout the country are currently under particular strain. Dedicated healthcare facilities for Ebola can also be under pressure and many medical facilities expect to be paid up-front. Enhanced screening measures have been introduced for outbound passengers at Conakry airport. Delays are likely to be experienced at Guinea's land border crossings, particularly those with Liberia and Sierra Leone. This is due to enhanced screening measures. Guinea-Bissau has closed its land borders with Guinea in a bid to prevent the deadly virus from spreading.

At least two deaths, several injuries and destruction of property were reported during riots that broke out in the eastern suburbs of Conakry on 18 February 2014. Since then, riots have continued throughout the capital city and in nearby towns. The riots and protests are a result of frequent power cuts. Further such violence is likely to continue over the coming weeks. Violence has broken out in Kankan, in the "Upper Guinea" region in the east of the country. At least three deaths have been reported since 14 December as well as a number of injuries and destruction of property. MS Risk advises all travellers to avoid this region of the country as further instability is likely to continue.

There is currently a low threat from terrorism. Nearly 100 people were reported to have been killed in July in an outbreak of ethnic violence in the "Guinea Forestiere" region in the far south-east of Guinea. A large number of injuries were also reported and properties destroyed. Areas of Guinea that border Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, the Ivory coast, Liberia and Sierra Leone are often tense and have an increased military presence. Therefore, MS Risk advises against all travel to the regions bordering the countries listed above. There have been regular reports of robberies on the routes Mamou, Faranah, Kissidougou, Guekedou, Macent and Nzerekore. MS Risk advises all travellers on these routes to remain vigilant and to avoid travel after dark. Official and unofficial checkpoints may be set up along these routes. Vehicles and passengers are submitted to checks on documentation and baggage. It is advised that you approach such checkpoints with caution, as corruption and extortion are common at roadblocks. Occasionally, checkpoints can be a pretext for armed robbery. Road travel is hazardous during the rainy season, which occurs from May to October. Torrential rains can cause

floods and landslides. MS Risk advises you to monitor the local weather reports and expect difficulties when travelling to affected areas during this season.

On the Ground Reporting

- **30 August 2014** – Guinea's local government reported Saturday that clashes between protesters and security forces in a Guinean city at the epicenter of the West African Ebola outbreak have left at least 55 wounded. A curfew was imposed in the city of N'Zerekore, Guinea's second-largest city, after protests occurred Thursday and Friday. Regional governor Lancei Conde confirmed Saturday's clashes, stating that twenty-seven law enforcement officers were amongst the wounded. According to city prefect Aboubacar M'bop Camara, protesters had "attacked the regional hospital's ambulance, UNICEF vehicles, the vehicle of the cardiologist at the regional hospital and the car of a private individual."
- **28 August 2014** – Riots broke out in Guinea's second-largest city Nzerekore after rumors spread that health workers had infected people with the deadly Ebola virus. According to on the ground sources, a crowd of young men, some armed with clubs and pistols, set up barricades across the city on Thursday and threatened to attack the hospital. While security forces later moved in to restore order, one resident reported that gunshots were fired by the rioters, leaving several people injured. The Ebola virus was first reported in southeastern Guinea in March and has killed more than 400 people in the country, however the rate of infection is slower than in neighboring Liberia and Sierra Leone. Officials in Conakry have disclosed that while the epidemic has been controlled, there is concern over rising cases in the southern border region, which officials blame on victims that have spilled over from neighboring countries, seeking better treatment. The Guinean government's last report, issued on August 26, indicated that there were 12 suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola cases in Nzerekore.



Guinea - Bissau

No Travel Restrictions



Security Summary

There are currently no travel restrictions for Guinea-Bissau. An outbreak of the Ebola virus disease has been confirmed in Guinea, Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Liberia. While there currently are no confirmed Ebola cases in Guinea-Bissau, the country has taken preventative measures, including closing all land borders with Guinea. MS Risk advises all travellers to Guinea-Bissau to take the necessary precautions, including maintaining strict standards of hygiene and avoiding eating bush meat.

Although the security situation is currently calm, the current political situation remains uncertain throughout the country and the possibility of civil or military unrest in Guinea-Bissau remains high. While political tensions in Guinea-Bissau remain calm, this could change at any moment. All travellers to the country are advised to monitor the political situation and remain vigilant at all times. MS Risk advises against all travel to the northwestern regions of the country, specifically those which border the Casamance region of Senegal, including the Sao Domingos/Mpack road.

On the Ground Reporting

- **30 August 2014** – On Saturday, Guinea-Bissau launched a nationwide hygiene drive, declaring the country “on alert” after neighboring Senegal announced that the deadly Ebola virus had been confirmed in the country. According to Prime Minister Domingos Simoes Pereira’s office, the campaign will involve the cleaning and disinfection of public places “across the entire country” on the last Saturday of every month. On Friday, Senegal confirmed its first case of the virus that has killed more than 1,500 people across West Africa since the start of the year. The case marked the first time a new country has been hit by the outbreak since July.

Ivory Coast

Avoid all but essential travel to part(s) of the country



Security Summary

An outbreak of the Ebola virus disease has been confirmed in Guinea, Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Liberia. While there currently are no confirmed Ebola cases in the Ivory Coast, the country has taken preventative measures, including banning all flights from countries that have been affected by the outbreak. MS Risk advises all travellers to the Ivory Coast to take the necessary precautions, including maintaining strict standards of hygiene and avoiding eating bush meat.

MS Risk advises against all but essential travel to the western regions of Dix-Huit Montagnes, Haut-Sassandra, Moyen-Cavally and Bas-Sassandra. Since August 2012, there have been a number of shootings around the capital of Abidjan. Attacks have mainly occurred at night with the targets usually being police and military officials. Further such incidents cannot be ruled out at this time, consequently MS Risk advises those in the capital city to remain vigilant at all times. There is an underlying threat from terrorism. Attacks could be indiscriminate, including in places frequented by foreigners.



On the Ground Reporting

- **23 August 2014** – The Ivory Coast’s Prime Minister confirmed Saturday that the country has closed its borders with Ebola-hit Guinea and Liberia in a bid to protect citizens against the spread of the epidemic, which has killed 1,427 people across West Africa. In a statement, Prime Minister Daniel Kaban Duncan disclosed that the closure was implemented on Friday “to protect all people, including foreigners, living on Ivorian territory.” The move comes as Liberia reported the first Ebola deaths in the southeastern regions of the country, which borders the Ivory Coast. Liberia has been one of the hardest hit countries, with 624 deaths since March.

Liberia

Avoid all but essential travel to part(s) of the country



Security Summary

MS Risk currently advises all but essential travel to Liberia, except for those who are involved in the direct response to the Ebola outbreak.

On 8 August, the World Health Organization (WHO) released a statement following a meeting of the International Health Regulation Emergency Committee, declaring the Ebola outbreak a public health emergency of international concern. Cases of the Ebola virus have been confirmed in a number of areas of Liberia, including in the capital city. While there are currently no travel restrictions for Liberia, on July 27, the government announced that all borders of Liberia have been closed, with the exception of major entry points including the Roberts International Airport, James Spriggs Payne Airport, Foya Crossing, Bo Waterside Crossing and Ganta Crossing. The Liberia Airport Authority has also introduced enhanced screening measures for both inbound and outbound travellers at airport facilities. On 5 August, British Airways announced that they were suspending flights to Liberia and Sierra Leone until 31 August. This is due to the deteriorating public health situation. Some other airlines have also suspended flights to Liberia. MS Risk advises all to carefully assess your need to travel to Liberia. If you do decide to travel, we advise that you make sure you have adequate arrangements in place for onward travel/exit and have adequate emergency health provisions. Due to the Ebola outbreak, general medical facilities throughout the country are currently under particular strain. Dedicated healthcare facilities for Ebola can also be under pressure and many medical facilities expect to be paid up-front. The Liberian Airport Authority has introduced enhanced screening measures for both inbound and outbound travellers at airport facilities. MS Risk advises all travellers to maintain strict standards of hygiene, avoid contact with symptomatic and deceased patients, avoid contact with live or dead animals and avoid consumption of bush meat.

MS Risk advises against all but essential travel to parts of Liberia, specifically those regions of the country that border with the Ivory Coast. There is a high level of crime in Monrovia, including armed robbery. The Liberian National Police has a very limited capability to prevent or detect crime, or to provide emergency response in any part of the country. Foreigners have been mugged in the Mamba Point and Sinkor areas of Monrovia (including Sinkor beach in broad daylight) where most international visitors stay. The roads from Monrovia to Roberts International Airport, the port town of Buchanan and to the border with Sierra Leone at Bo Waterside, and to the border with Guinea at Ganta, are mainly paved and in reasonable condition. Most other roads outside Monrovia are unpaved. Driving and road conditions will significantly deteriorate during the rainy season, which occurs from May to November. Many roads during this time become impassable. MS Risk advises against all travel at night outside of Monrovia, except to or from Roberts International Airport. This is because roads are treacherous and all the roads are unlit. Furthermore, vehicles often do not have any lights. As a result, travellers after dark are more vulnerable to being robbed at an illegal barricade. Liberia has become increasingly stable since the internal conflict ended in 2003. However the security situation remains fragile. Furthermore, although Liberian President Charles Taylor is currently serving out a long prison sentence in the UK, following his

conviction by the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Taylor's supporters have warned that UK travellers in Liberia may be at risk of reprisal. Consequently MS Risk advises all British travellers to be extra vigilant and to avoid discussing any political issues. There is a low threat from terrorism.

There is a possibility that retaliatory attacks could be carried out in Liberia, this is due to the country's participation in the intervention in Mali. UNMIL peacekeepers are deployed to the main population centers around Liberia, and patrol the main roads.

On the Ground Reporting

- **29 August 2014** – Officials in Liberia disclosed Friday that they will open up a neighborhood in the capital city where thousands of people were barricaded in a bid to contain the spread of the Ebola virus. According to Information Minister Lewis Brown, lifting the quarantine, which is due to occur on Saturday morning, will not mean that there is no Ebola in the West Point neighborhood, however authorities feel confident that they can screen for the sick and that the community can now actively fight the disease. The neighborhood, which has around 50,000 people, was sealed off more than a week ago, a move that sparked unrest and which left many without access to food or safe water.
- **22 August 2014** - On Friday, officials in Liberia confirmed that the Ebola virus has now affected every region in the country. Officials have disclosed that two people have succumbed to the virus in Sinoe province, the last Ebola-free region of the country, which has seen the biggest toll in the region with 576 deaths. Over the past several months, the virus has spread relentlessly through Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, killing 1,350 people since March. While Nigeria is that latest country to be affected by the outbreak, it has shown some progress in fighting the epidemic.
- **21 August 2014** – On Thursday, calm returned to a neighbourhood in Liberia's capital city after clashes erupted between residents and security forces on Wednesday. Fighting broke out just hours after Liberia's President announced that the neighbourhood would be sealed off in what is the government's latest attempt at halting the spread of Ebola. Four residents in a quarantined Ebola-hit neighbourhood in the Liberian capital were injured Wednesday after clashes erupted between residents and police. On the ground sources have reported that the violence erupted after security forces entered the area in a bid to evacuate a government official and his family from the West Point neighbourhood of Monrovia. Soldiers opened fire and used tear gas on protesting crowds as they evacuated the state official. Clashes erupted hours after Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf announced that troops and police were sealing off the impoverished neighbourhood, with no one allowed to leave or enter the area. Many residents of West Point, which is located on a peninsula in the seaside capital, now fear that they will be cut off from food supplies as many market traders are no longer able to enter the neighbourhood. On the ground sources reported late Wednesday that food prices began to rise just hours after the announcement was made. While the government has promised to ensure food deliveries, sources have indicated that so far no such deliveries have been made. The area however remained quiet Wednesday evening despite a night-time curfew imposed. Dolo Town, which is located to the east of the capital city, has also been quarantined while a night-time curfew has been imposed.
- **20 August 2014** - In a bid to stem the Ebola epidemic, Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf imposed a nighttime curfew, which is set to begin Wednesday evening. In a radio address late Tuesday, President Sirleaf disclosed, "commencing Wednesday, August 20 there will be a curfew from 9:00 PM to 6:00 AM (2100 to 0600 GMT)." The new measures come just a day after Liberia's Information Minister Lewis Brown

confirmed the return of seventeen missing Ebola patients, who had fled a medical facility in West Point on Saturday after it was attacked by youths. Their disappearance had raised fears that they may further spread the virus to areas of the country that have not been affected.

- **18 August 2014** - Despite earlier denials, Liberia's government confirmed Monday that seventeen suspected Ebola patients have gone missing after a health center in the capital city was attacked and looted over the weekend. Police officials disclosed late Saturday that a quarantine center for suspected Ebola patients in the Liberian capital Monrovia had been attacked and looted by protesters. While the government had initially sought to reassure people by stating that all the patients had been transferred to an Ebola treatment center in the John F. Kennedy Memorial Medical Centre in Monrovia, on Monday, Information Minister Lewis Brown confirmed that 17 of the thirty-seven patients are unaccounted for and that they likely have gone "back into their communities". The Minister further disclosed that authorities are now trying to track them down, adding that he remains confident that they will return. The incident occurred Saturday evening in the densely populated West Point town ship, with hospital officials stating at least twenty patients, who were being monitored for signs of the deadly virus, had left the center. A senior police officer also confirmed that bloodstained mattresses, bedding and medical equipment were taken from the center. While the assistant to the health minister disclosed that the incident occurred because protesters were unhappy that patients were being brought in from other parts of the capital city, other reports have suggested that protesters believed that the Ebola virus was a hoax and that they wanted to force the quarantine center to close. The center was set up in order to observe suspected Ebola patients and to then transfer them to a main center if their tests proved to be positive. It currently remains unknown if the center had any patients infected with the virus however one report suggested that there were patients that had tested positive for the virus. **Update (19 August 2014)** – Liberia's information minister confirmed Tuesday that all seventeen suspected Ebola patients, who had fled a quarantine center in Monrovia over the past weekend, have been located and transferred to another clinic. A statement released by Lewis Brown disclosed that the Liberian government is "...glad to confirm that all of the 17 individuals have been accounted for and have now been transferred to JFK Ebola specialist treatment center." The minister also revealed that three infected African doctors, who had received the experimental Ebola drug ZMapp, were showing "remarkable signs of improvement."

Domestic News

- **26 August 2014** – Liberia's president has fired a number of ministers and senior government officials after they defied an order to return to the West African country in order to lead the fight against the deadly Ebola outbreak. As part of a state of emergency announcement made on August 6, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf told overseas ministers to return to Liberia within a week, warning that extraordinary measures were required "for the very survival of our state." A statement released by the president's office on Wednesday indicated that President Sirleaf had "directed that all officials occupying ministerial level positions or equivalent – senior and junior – managing directors, deputy/assistant directors or equivalent, commissioners et cetera who violated the orders are hereby relieved of their positions. While the statement did not disclose how many ministers were affected, or which ones have been dismissed, sources have clarified that only deputy ministers and senior officials were involved in the dismissal and not cabinet-level ministers.

Mali

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

Avoid all but essential travel to part(s) of the country



Security Summary

Summary

MS Risk advises against all travel to the provinces of Kidal, Gao, Timbuktu and Mopti, as well as parts of the provinces of Kayes, Koulikoro and Segou. Fighting in Kidal, in the northern region of Mali, broke out between rebel groups and government forces on 17 May 2014, resulting in casualties on both sides. While a ceasefire between the Malian government and three rebel groups was signed on 23 May 2014, the situation in the country remains tense. There have also been related violent protests that have occurred in the capital, Bamako, and there is a strong possibility of further unrest. MS Risk advises all travellers to Mali to avoid large crowds and demonstrations.



There has been an outbreak of the Ebola virus which has been confirmed in Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Nigeria. While there currently are no confirmed reports of Ebola cases in Mali, MS Risk advises that you take caution, maintain strict standards of hygiene and avoid eating bush meat.

MS Risk advises against all travel to Bamako. We also advise against all travel to the rest of Mali, especially to

the northern regions of the country. Although Bamako is generally calm, the situation throughout the rest of the country is still volatile.

If you are in Bamako, MS Risk advises you to maintain a high level of vigilance, to keep a low profile and to stay alert to the local political developments. We also advise that you avoid sensitive areas, including military installations and large gatherings of people. Night time checkpoints continue to operate in Bamako, largely controlling access to military and government facilities. Checkpoints are in place from approximately 9PM until dawn.

During the rainy season, which runs from May until October, torrential rains can cause floods and landslides, and may result in houses collapsing. In late August, there were reports of flash flooding that occurred in Bamako. The neighborhoods of Bankoni, Taliko, Lafiabougou, Djicoroni Woyowayanko, Lafiabougou Bougouba and Bougoudani were all hit by floods during the rains storms which lasted most of the day. MS Risk advises anyone in the capital city to monitor the local weather reports and to expect difficulties when travelling to affected areas during this season.

Terrorism

There still remains a high threat from terrorism in Mali. No curfew is currently in place however MS Risk advises those in the country to monitor the local media for reports of any new measures.

Attacks could be indiscriminate, including in places that are frequented by expatriates and foreign travellers. There is also a high threat of kidnapping in Mali by al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and by the splinter group, the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJWA). Although AQIM uses the northern region of Mali as an operating base, it has proven its capability of travelling long distances in order to carry out attacks, some of which have occurred in neighboring countries. As such the kidnap threat cannot be isolated within the northern regional stronghold. In turn, criminal gangs have previously been engaged to carry out kidnappings for terrorist groups in return for financial rewards. Subsequently attacks can take place throughout Mali.

There have been incidents of armed banditry, car-jacking, and kidnap in the northern regions of Mali. Bandits and smugglers are particularly active across the Mali-Algeria, Mali-Burkina Faso, Mali-Mauritania and Mali-Niger borders and pose a threat to travellers, especially after dark. Authorities in Mali have provided the following numbers in case of emergencies:

- 80 00 11 14
- 80 00 11 15
- 20 22 13 35
- 20 23 95 15
- 20 23 95 11

Kidnapping

In the past, a number of Westerners have been kidnapped by terrorists in Mali and in the Sahel region. Since 2008, over 25 Westerners have been kidnapped in the Sahel. Victims have included tourists, NGO workers and diplomats of a variety of nationalities, primarily European. These attacks have on occasion resulted in the murder of the hostages. The recent kidnapping of a French citizen in the western region of the country has come as a shock as the area where he was taken has been perceived as being stable and under governmental control. In the past, kidnap threats have typically emanated from the Azawad region in the north and east part of the county, as such this incident in the west has caused great concern. MS Risk

forecasts that there will be an increased and sustained kidnap threat across Mali and in certain border-regions for some time to come. Incidents of kidnap are likely to occur for three primary reasons:

- For Ransom - insurgents will raise finances for future operations. With the impending ECOWAS operation, this is accelerating as a concern.
- Human Shields - Insurgents will kidnap persons in order to deter/reduce the risk of direct action by governmental forces against them.
- Ideological - Kidnappings will occur for political purposes.

Since the coup in March 2012, and due to the ongoing political unrest, MS RISK judges that there is a continued heightened threat of kidnap for ransom in Mali and as such further attacks and kidnappings are highly likely to occur. Furthermore, although it is difficult to forecast how severe this threat will emerge, all affected organizations are recommended to review their current operations and contingencies which is in line to the previous advice which has been given. MS RISK currently advises against all travel to Mali.

Local Travel

Although the military intervention has regained control of the major northern cities in Mali, the situation remains tense in the region and there continues to be a high risk of retaliatory action by terrorist groups. MS Risk advises against all travel to the northern region of Mali, especially to the cities/towns of Gao, In Khalil, Kidal, and Timbuktu as well as the surrounding areas. Landmines have been used by groups operating in the north and northeast of Mali.

Night-time checkpoints continue to operate in Bamako. These checkpoints largely control access to military and Government facilities. Checkpoints are in place from approximately 9PM until dawn. MS Risk advises to keep vehicle and personal identification documents with you at all times while travelling by road. Furthermore, approach security checkpoints slowly and comply with instructions that are given.

MS RISK Guidance to Organizations in Mali:

With western diplomatic missions all warning against unnecessary travel to Mali, those companies with fixed interests in the country need to take measured precautions if they have not done so already. This is especially an issue for organizations with any interest in the so-called Azawad region - that portion of the country, which is under insurgent control. Preparations should include the following:

- Thinning out non-essential staff and dependents
- Restricting expat and local national internal travel
- Seeking advice from the security forces
- Ensuring journey management systems are in place and work
- Reviewing crisis management contingencies and carrying out exercises of these plans
- Registration of expatriates with relevant diplomatic missions and seeking advice on what support will be forthcoming (if any) if conditions deteriorate

- Liaison with insurers to know any exclusions or limits to existing cover

On the Ground Reporting

- **30 August 2014** – Algeria's foreign ministry announced Saturday that two Algerian diplomats kidnapped in Mali in April 2012 by the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) were freed on Saturday. According to the ministry, a third diplomat, consul Boualem Sayes, died in captivity "from a chronic illness." The ministry did not disclose whether Mourad Guessas and Kedour Miloudi had been released by their kidnappers or whether they had been freed in a military operation, the ministry did however note that Algeria did not pay a ransom to secure their freedom. The ministry also confirmed for the first time the execution, initially reported in September 2012, of vice-consul Tahar Touati, describing his death as an "odious assassination," and stating "the Algerian government stresses the necessity of continuing unabated the fight against terrorism and its multiple connections – drug trafficking and organized crime." A Malian security source confirmed the release of the two Algerian diplomats, disclosing "a wing of the armed groups in northern Mali managed on Friday night to secure the release of two Algerian diplomats from the hands of MUJAO," adding that the hostages were released in the Algerian desert town of Bordj Badji Mokhtar, which is located on the border with Mali. Algeria's consul in Gao, in northeastern Mali, along with six of his staff were taken hostage by MUJAO on 5 April 2012 while the militants were in control of the city.
- **29 August 2014** – Suspected armed Islamist militants fired rockets at a camp of the UN mission in the northern region of Mali on Friday. According to a Malian security source, the attackers fired four rockets at the MINUSMA base close to the border with Algeria at about 4:00 AM (0400 GMT). The source however has not disclosed whether the camp at Agulehoc had been struck or if there were any injuries. The attack occurred just days after a UN camp in the Kidal region was attacked. A Malian Islamist close to the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) claimed responsibility for that attack, which occurred Wednesday.
- **25 August 2014** – On Monday, campaigners condemned Mali's decision to release a judge accused of being a key figure in the 2012 Islamist militant occupation of the country's northern desert region. According to a joint statement released by the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the Malian Association of Human Rights (AMDH), Houka Houka Ah Alfousseyni, who was in Timbuktu during the occupation where he was said to have been involved in "grave human rights violations," was released on August 15 as part of negotiations between the Malian government and Islamist and separatist rebels. The organizations have disclosed that they "vehemently condemn" the release of Houka, who was arrested in January in the Timbuktu region and was in custody, awaiting trial. In the statement, AMDH president Moctar Mariko stated "this release is an attack on the independence of the justice system and a gross violation of the rights of victims to justice and truth." In July, as part of on-going peace negotiations, the Malian government and armed groups in the northern region of the country exchanged 86 prisoners. According to the FIDH and AMDH, the inmates included "42 members of armed groups accused of grave human rights violations and charged by the Malian courts." A Malian justice ministry official however has disclosed that the Malian government "...liberated people in the context of national reconciliation." A number of Islamist militias with ties to al-Qaeda occupied Gao, Timbuktu and a number of other northern Malian towns and cities for nine months in 2012. During that period, the groups exacted a brutal version of Islamic Sharia, which was characterized by amputations, beatings and executions before they were ousted by a French-led military intervention that was launched in January 2013.

International Developments

- **21 August 2014** – Officials at Amnesty International disclosed Thursday that minors, suspected of working as child soldiers for rebel groups in Mali, are now being left to languish in adult prisons in violation of their human rights. A report released by the rights group has revealed that since the country descended into a crisis in January 2012, a number of children had been recruited as child soldiers “by both pro-government militias and armed groups.” The report further noted that some had been “arrested by the Malian authorities and held in detention, without any adequate protection measures for children in custody, including being held together with adults.” The report was compiled from information gathered by Amnesty representatives who visited a prison in Mali in June last year. During that visit, Amnesty officials interviewed seven detainees believed to be minors under the age of 18. The authors of the report have disclosed that while they had found a birth certificate, indicating that one of the detainees was 16-years-old, the Malian authorities had failed to check the children’s age, instead placing them in an adult division in Bamako’s prison and police camp. The report further notes that the children had been “subjected to various forms of human rights violations whilst in detention, including being constantly confined to their cells and not being allowed outside their prison cells to go for exercise, as well as lack of access to legal counsel.” Gaetan Mootoo, the organization’s West Africa research, noted, “children currently held in adult prisons must be transferred to government agencies or to organizations that will guarantee them the special protections required by international law.” Despite four of the youths being released, Amnesty officials have disclosed “the Malian authorities have since continued to arrest and detain more children accused of being members of these armed groups, suggesting lack of political will to address the problem.”

Mauritania

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

Avoid all but essential travel to part(s) of the country



Security Summary

Summary

Due to the current Ebola outbreak in Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone, Mauritania has closed some of its southern border crossings. MS Risk advises all travellers to the area to check with local officials. Mauritanian authorities have decided to deny entry to citizens arriving from those African countries that have been affected by the current Ebola outbreak.

MS Risk advises against all travel to the provinces of Tiris Zemmour, Adrar, Tagant, Hodh el Chargui, Dakhlet-Nouadhibou and Inchiri. We also advise against all travel to the northern and eastern regions of the country, especially the desert areas north of Oualata-Tichit-Ouadane-Zouerat line, as well as the border areas with Algeria, Mali and Morocco. MS Risk also advises against all but essential travel to the rest of the country, which includes travel along the Nouakchott-Nouadhibou corridor which comprises of the north-south arterial road that runs between these two cities and which passes through Nouamghar. This is due to extremist groups and armed smugglers that are active in these areas,



which has resulted in high threats of terrorism as well as a heightened risk of banditry and kidnapping.

Since early 2012, there have been demonstrations in a number of locations across the country, including Nouakchott. In general, demonstrations have been peaceful however some have involved clashes with police, resulting in the use of tear gas. On 3 March 2014, one person died and at least 15 were injured in Nouakchott during a demonstration over an alleged case of apostasy. Protests have been located near the Presidency and the main market area. Smaller demonstrations have taken place in other towns, including Nouadhibou. There is a possibility that further such demonstrations will occur. MS Risk therefore advises all travellers to avoid all political gatherings and demonstrations.

Terrorism

Following the French military intervention in Mali there has been a heightened possibility of retaliatory attacks that may target Western interests in the region. Attacks could be indiscriminate and by occur in places that are frequented by foreigners. Consequently we advise vigilance.

Kidnapping

There is a high risk of kidnapping throughout Mauritania and Westerners are the favoured target. In the past, hostages have been held captive for several months before being released. MS Risk advises anyone traveling to Mauritania to take particular caution in the region of Inchire (Akjoujt is the capita) as well as in the areas that border Mali and Morocco.

For companies with employees remaining in Mauritania, MS Risk advises you to arrange a trustworthy escort that is familiar with the country. The use of varied and unpredictable routes and schedules when moving from one location to another is also highly advised. Exercise a high awareness of personal security at all times and monitor the local developments. On 14 May 2013, the Government of Nigeria declared a state of emergency in the states of Adamwa, Borno and Yobe. Both Adamawa and Borno border Cameroon's far North, North and Adamaoua provinces. It is possible that military operations there might have an impact across the border in Cameroon.

On the Ground Reporting

- **21 August 2014** – According to a presidential decree released Thursday, Mauritania's newly re-elected President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz has named a former senior official with the West African nation's state-owned mining and construction companies as the country's new prime minister. Yahya Ould Hademine, whose nomination was announced by the country's state-owned press agency Wednesday, began his career at the national iron ore mining company SNIM before rising to head its construction subsidiary ATTM. In 2010, he entered government as transportation minister. Ould Hademine replaces Moulaye Ould Mohamed Laghdaf, who had served as prime minister since a 2008 coup, which brought the current president to power. Political consultations to form a new cabinet are currently underway. President Abdel Aziz, who is seen as a key Western ally in the fight against al-Qaeda-linked militants that threaten security in West Africa, won 82 percent of the vote in the June 21 presidential elections.

Niger

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

Avoid all but essential travel to part(s) of the country



Security Summary

MS Risk advises against all travel to the following parts of Niger: all areas of the country north of the city of Abalak, including the Air Massif region; the province of Agadez (including the road linking Assamakato Agadez and the city of Agadez); areas of Tahoua province north of the city of Tahoua, including the city itself; the area of Tillaberi province north of Niamey, including the road from Niamey to Gao and the road from Niamey to Menaka; areas within 40 km of the border with Nigeria in Diffa, Zinder and Maradi provinces. MS Risk advises against all but essential travel to the rest of Niger, including the capital city of Niamey. There remains a high threat from, including kidnapping, in Niger. On 1 June 2013, three guards were killed and twenty-two inmates escaped from the main prison in Niamey during an attack by suspected Islamist militants. Travellers in Niamey should continue to monitor developments and be alert to announcements and remain vigilant at all times. On 23 May 2013, a military barracks in the town of Agadez and a uranium processing facility near the town of Arlit, approximately 150 miles north of Agadez, were attacked. A number of people were killed and injured. The terrorist group which claimed responsibility for the two attacks has publicly threatened to carry out further attacks in Niger. On 14 May 2013, the Government of Nigeria declared a state of emergency in its northern states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. Both Borno and Yobe border southern Niger. Consequently there is a risk that instability may spill over the border from Nigeria to Niger. There is a high threat of kidnapping from terrorist groups including AQIM and MOJWA. These groups have kidnapped Westerners in Niger and in the wider Sahel region, including in Niamey and the north and west of Niger. Further kidnappings are likely to occur. There is a threat of retaliatory attacks in Niger, due to the country's participation in the French-led intervention in Mali. Levels of crime are high, especially in the capital city



of Niamey. Thefts, robberies and residential break-ins can occur at any time. Banditry, smuggling and other criminal activity is common in border areas, especially after dark. Bandits are thought to be operating in the border area with Nigeria, south of Zinder. MS Risk advises avoiding crossing the border with Nigeria during the hours of darkness.

Since May 2013, outbreaks of cholera have been reported in several places in Niger. As of 25 November 2013 a total of 577 cases, including 13 deaths, have been reported.

Domestic News

- **28 August 2014** – According to an opposition official, Niger's head of parliament, who is currently facing questions in a probe into international baby-trafficking, has "discreetly" left the country for Burkina Faso. Confirming private and state television reports, a Niger opposition figure disclosed that Hama Amadou "...discreetly left the country and is current in Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso whose authorities have confirmed his presence." While Amadou is suspected of "complicity" in the trafficking of babies born in Nigeria and trafficked into Niger via Benin, the minister, who is considered to be the leading challenger to President Mahamadou Issoufou ahead of the 2016 presidential elections, has denounced the charges, stating that they are politically motivated and that they would involve a breach of his parliamentary immunity. So far there have been no attempts made in order to strip Amadou of his immunity from prosecution. In late June, seventeen people, twelve of them women, were arrested for their suspected involvement in a baby-trafficking ring between Nigeria, Benin and Niger. One of Amadou's wives is amongst the seventeen people. On Saturday, Nigeria's Agriculture Minister Abdou Labo was remanded in custody. The alleged crime involves forging and altering birth certificates in order to switch the names of mothers. According to one source close to the case, "the trafficking network is used primarily by couples who are unable to have children." In Nigeria, so called "baby factories," which are private clinics where young girls sell their newborns to couples who are unable to conceive, are regularly uncovered. According to Nigerian authorities, cases in which mothers give up babies born from rape have been reported at such clinics however the more common cases include young women who are facing unwanted pregnancies. The newborns are usually sold for several thousand euros, with mothers receiving around 150 euros.
- **23 August 2014** – On Saturday, Niger's agriculture minister was remanded in custody in what his aides have stated is a politically charged probe into suspected baby-trafficking from neighboring Nigeria. According to one of the minister's aides, Abdou Labo "was taken to Niamey's Say prison after he was heard by a judge who remanded him in custody." According to sources, one of the wives of Hama Amadou, who is Niger's head of parliament and who is considered to be the main rival of Niger President Mahamadou Issoufou, is amongst the seventeen people, which includes twelve women, being held in the case since the end of June. All suspects have been charged with substituting children, forgery and making false statements. Sources have disclosed that the minister is suspected of "complicity" in the trafficking of babies between Nigeria, where they were conceived, Benin and Niger. While those close to him have indicated that these accusations are false, Justice Minister Marou Amaoud has warned, "closing our eyes would have been political," adding that they "...will crack down on any shameful trafficking, whoever is implicated." Public prosecutors have also disclosed that there was "evidence" that the law was violated after a thorough investigation in the three countries. Labo, who was interior minister between 2011 and 2013, is deputy leader of the opposition Democratic and Social Convention, which is headed by Mahamane Ousmane, who was the country's first democratically elected president between 1993 and 1996.

Nigeria

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

**Avoid all but essential travel
to part(s) of the country**



Security Summary

Summary

On 8 August, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Ebola outbreak a public health emergency of international concern. Some airlines have suspended flights to the affected countries due to the deteriorating public health situation. MS Risk advises all to carefully assess your need to travel to Nigeria. If you do decide to travel, we



advise that you make sure you have adequate arrangements in place for onward travel/exit and have adequate emergency health provisions. Due to the Ebola outbreak, general medical facilities throughout the country are currently under particular strain. Dedicated healthcare facilities for Ebola can also be under pressure and many medical facilities expect to be paid up-front. The Nigerian government has introduced new protocols for arriving at all airports, including Ebola screenings. MS Risk advises all travellers to maintain strict standards of hygiene, avoid contact with symptomatic and deceased patients, avoid contact with live or dead animals and avoid consumption of bush meat.

We advise against all travel to Adamawa State, Borno State, Yobe State, Gombe State and Bauchi State. This is due to

the frequent violent attacks, which have been occurring over the past months. More recent attacks have increasingly focused on public places, including bars and restaurants. These attacks have resulted in a large number of deaths and injuries. We also advise against all travel to Kano City and Okene City, which has also seen a frequent number of high levels of violence.

There is currently a high threat from terrorism. Over the past few weeks there have been a number of explosive attacks in Damaturu, Kano, Jos, Kaduna, Abuja and Lagos. Further such attacks are highly likely to occur. MS Risk currently advises all travellers in Nigeria to avoid public places, especially where crowds gather.

On 16 July 2014, a German national was kidnapped near Gombi, in northeastern Nigeria. While no group has claimed responsibility for the kidnapping, officials in the region are blaming Boko Haram.

We advise against all but essential travel to Kano state, Kaduna State, Jigwa State, Katsina State, Sokoto State, Zamfara State, Kebbi State, Jos City, Riyom and Barkin Ladi Local Government Areas in Plateau State; Okene Region of Kogi State. These areas have witnessed an increase in violent attacks. We also advise against all but essential travel to Mubi Town in Adamawa State and the area north of Mubi Town that borders Borno State where there has also been a rise in violent attacks. We also advise against all but essential travel to the non-riverine areas of Delta, Bayelsa, Rivers and Akwa Ibom States, Abia State, Kaduna City, Zaria City.

Northern Nigeria

Travelling anywhere in the northern region of Nigeria is extremely dangerous as there is a high risk of travellers being kidnapped or caught up in a terrorist or other violent incident. While taking the right precautions will aid in reducing the risks, this will not eliminate them all together. MS Risk advises all travellers to the northern region of the country to not maintain regular patterns of travel or movement.

If you live in northern Nigeria, you are advised to review your security regularly and to strengthen it accordingly. Due to the risks, particularly of terrorism, having increased in the past few years, good security two years ago is unlikely to be adequate now.

Companies with workers in northern Nigeria, even in areas which are not subject to specific advice against travel, will require a high level of security. In light of the recent kidnappings of Westerners, employers are advised to review their security arrangements and to ensure that compounds are protected.

There is a high threat of terrorism occurring in Nigeria. A bomb attack that occurred at a bus station in Kano city on 18 March 2013 resulted in multiple casualties. Attacks could be indiscriminate, including government, security and educational institutions, international organisations as well as public venues and areas such as restaurants, bars, markets, hotels, shopping centers, places of worship and other areas that are frequented by expatriates, foreign tourists and business travelers. Terrorist attacks have been known to occur on religious and public holidays. There have been regular attacks on churches in northern Nigeria at times of worship. The US government has published an Emergency Message for US citizens, detailing information that Boko Haram may be planning attacks in Abuja. This information has been assessed as being credible and attacks could occur at any time, including against international hotels that are frequently visited by Westerners. There is also an increased level of kidnap threat in Nigeria in which foreign nationals have typically been the targets of such kidnaps.

Kidnapping

Although recent incidents of kidnapping have mostly occurred in northern Nigeria, MS Risk advises that such kidnappings can take place anywhere in the country.

- On 16 February 2013, after storming the compound of Lebanese-owned construction firm Setraco in Bauchi state, gunmen killed a security guard and abducted a Briton, an Italian, a Greek, two Lebanese and two Syrian workers. The British construction worker is believed to have been killed along with the six other foreign nationals. This was the

worst case of foreigners being kidnapped in the mostly Muslim north of Africa's most populous country since an insurgency by Islamist militants intensified two years ago.

- In December 2012, a French national was kidnapped by armed men in Katsina State in northern Nigeria, reportedly from a residential compound.
- In 2012, a Lebanese national was kidnapped in Kaduna State. His Lebanese colleague was killed during the abduction
- In January 2012, a German national was killed in Kano city. He was killed on 31 May 2012.
- In May 2011, a British national and an Italian national were kidnapped together in Kebbi State. Both hostages were killed in Sokoto on 8 March 2012.

Threats and Terrorism

Attacks by Islamist groups in northern Nigeria have become the biggest threat to stability in Africa's top oil producing country. This has been exacerbated by the fact that Western governments are currently concerned that militants may link up with groups elsewhere in the region, including al-Qaeda's North African wing, AQIM. These concerns have been further intensified by the conflict and military intervention in nearby Mali.

On the Ground Reporting

- **30 August 2014** – According to witnesses, Boko Haram gunmen have killed scores of residents in a Nigerian town on the border with Cameroon that was recently captured by the militant group. Earlier this week, Boko Haram seized control of Gamboru Ngala after taking over the military and police facilities in a fierce gun battle that forced thousands of residents across the border into Cameroon. Residents also fled Fotokol for fear of attack despite being told that militants were after security personnel and local vigilantes. In recent weeks, in an apparent move to carve out a state for themselves, Boko Haram has seized territory in northern Borno state near the border with Cameroon. In a video released last week, Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau declared the town of Gwoza, which the militants captured earlier this month, as part of an Islamic caliphate. The militants are now believed to control at least three districts in Borno state and at least one each in the neighboring states of Adamawa and Yobe. The military however has maintained that Nigeria's sovereignty is intact and has denied reports that soldiers recently fled to Cameroon after the militant group carried out an assault on Gamboru Ngala.
- **29 August 2014** – Some 160 people are currently being medically monitored in Nigeria's oil-producing hub Port Harcourt after a doctor died from the virus. According to a statement issued by the local government, "as of today, none of them has shown symptoms of any kind. We are in touch with them constantly and they also call us to tell us their condition." On Thursday, the Nigerian government confirmed that the doctor was Nigeria's sixth person to die from the hemorrhagic fever and the first outside the city of Lagos. The doctor fell ill after treating an official from the ECOWAS regional bloc, who had travelled to the city after coming into contact with a Liberian-American man who brought the virus into Nigeria and who died on July 25. The official slipped through the surveillance net in Lagos. He was later brought back to Lagos however it was found that he had recovered from the virus.
- **28 August 2014** – Officials in Nigeria confirmed Thursday that a doctor has died from Ebola in the southeastern oil city of Port Harcourt. Health Minister Onyebuchi Chukwu disclosed that the medic died on

August 22 after treating a patient who had come into contact with the Liberian-American man who brought the virus to Nigeria and who died in a Lagos hospital on July 25. The minister further disclosed that the patient who had come into contact with the Liberian-American victim had managed to travel to Port Harcourt in the last week of July, where he saw the doctor after displaying Ebola-like symptom, adding “after four days, following a manhunt for him, he returned to Lagos by which time he was found to be without symptoms.” Several contacts have been “traced, registered and placed under surveillance,” however officials have not specified how many. The death of the medic brings to six the number of people who have died from the hemorrhagic fever in Nigeria. It is also the first case of the deadly virus to occur outside of Lagos. Fifteen people have now been confirmed to have the disease in West African country. News that a doctor has died 435 kilometers (270 miles) away from the epicenter will likely raise fears about the spread of the virus at a time when Nigerians were beginning to think that the outbreak was coming to an end. On Wednesday, Chukwu noted that while the virus was contained, as there had been no cases reported outside Lagos, he warned against complacency in fighting the disease. Port Harcourt, the capital of Rivers state, is the center of Nigeria’s oil industry and is home to a number of oil companies, including Anglo-Dutch Shell and US firm Chevron. While operations have not yet been affected in Africa’s biggest oil producer, a spokesman for Shell’s Nigerian subsidiary disclosed Thursday that officials at the company were “monitoring the Ebola outbreak very closely.”

- **27 August 2014** – Nigeria’s president has ordered that all schools in the country remain closed as part of measures currently being implemented in order to prevent the further spread of the deadly Ebola virus. The new academic year was due to start on 15 September however schools will remain closed until 13 October. A statement released by Education Minister Ibrahim Shekarau indicated “all primary and secondary schools in private and public sectors are to remain closed until Monday, October 13,” adding that the closures will allow staff to be trained on how to handle suspected Ebola cases.
 - Nigeria’s health minister on Wednesday warned against complacency in the country’s fight against Ebola. The warning came one day after Onyebuchi Chukwu announced that two more people had been released from isolation, bringing the total number of patients to have been successfully treated to seven. Since July 25, five people have died in Nigeria. The minister however has cautioned against any headlines suggesting that the virus has been eradicated in the country. While WHO has disclosed that it is encouraged by the fact that all confirmed cases of Ebola in Nigeria had come from a single chain of transmission and that there had been no incidences of the virus outside of Lagos, Chukwu has noted, “nothing stops someone coming with a fresh case.”
- **26 August 2014** – On Tuesday, Boko Haram militants attempted to blow up a bridge on the Nigerian border with Cameroon after overrunning a town and sending residents and soldiers fleeing. A Cameroonian police officer, stationed in the far north town of Fotokol, confirmed that the militants tried to destroy the bridge, which serves as the border crossing with Gamboru Ngala in Nigeria. The attack on the bridge came just one day after Boko Haram stormed the town of Gamboru Ngala. By late Monday evening, the militant group had taken over the police station, a military barracks and a vocational training center, where they had based themselves. In recent weeks, Boko Haram has drastically altered its tactics, from carrying out hit-and-run attacks to holding areas in Borno state.
 - Reports have emerged that Boko Haram militants have seized control of a Nigerian town after soldiers deployed there fled to take refuge across the border in nearby Cameroon. According to a



Cameroonian police source, “Boko Haram fighters moved into Ashigashia” overnight Monday, where they slaughtered three people in front of a church. Over the weekend, nearly 500 Nigerian soldiers fled the Nigerian border cities of Ashigashia and Kerawa in a bid to take refuge from Boko Haram militants. Nigeria’s military however has dismissed these claims, maintaining that the troops were “changing through the borders in a tactical maneuver” when they found themselves on Cameroonian soil. A number of sources have disclosed that the security situation is “deteriorating day by day in the border towns,” noting that even those charged with keeping the peace have fled attacks by Boko Haram. A small river that marks the border between the two countries bisects Ashigashia, which straddles the border between Cameroon and Nigeria. According to one police source, Boko Haram is now attempting to take the Cameroonian side of the city.

- Meanwhile Nigeria’s defense headquarters disclosed Tuesday that Nigerian government soldiers, who witnesses reported fleeing into neighboring Cameroon during a clash with a large number of Boko Haram militants, have handed over their weapons to Cameroonian authorities and are on their way back to Nigeria. One resident of Gamboru Ngala, a town neighboring Cameroon, disclosed Monday that soldiers and hundreds of civilians had fled into Cameroon, seeking shelter from the militants. While Cameroon army spokesman Didier Badjek put the number of Nigerian soldiers who fled across the border at 480, a statement released Monday by Nigeria’s defense headquarters disclosed that the soldiers were on their way back to Nigeria after following protocol by handing over “their weapons in order to assure the friendly county that they were not on a hostile mission.” According to the defense headquarters, the soldiers were initially able to repel an attack by Boko Haram, killing many of the fighters, however “...hours after the attack, a bigger number of Boko Haram gunmen arrived from the other side of the town and engaged the soldiers who could not stand their superior force and had to join us in running into Cameroon,” adding that the Nigerian soldiers had performed a “tactical maneuver” when they found themselves in Cameroon.
- **25 August 2014** – On Monday, thousands of people fled across the border into Cameroon after Boko Haram attacked a border town in northeastern Nigeria. The attack on Gamboru Ngala comes just months after the town was almost entirely destroyed in May in a devastating assault that also left more than 300 people dead and resulted in outrage over the lack of military response. The latest incident is a sign of the militant group’s continuing assault in northeastern Nigeria and demonstrates the militant group’s growing ability to strike at will. According to local residents, Monday’s attack began at about 5:30 AM (0430 GMT), with the militants launching coordinated strikes on the main police station and a military base known as the Harmony camp. One security source disclosed that many local residents sought refuge across the border in the northern Cameroon town of Fotokol, where troop reinforcements were being sent. Residents in Fotokol, which is separated from Gamboru Ngala by a river also reported “intense” fighting throughout the morning. Unconfirmed reports have indicated that Boko Haram militants may be in control of a key road that connects Gamboru Ngala to the state capital Maiduguri. In recent weeks, Boko Haram has taken over a number of towns in Borno state, a move that demonstrates a shift in hit-and-run tactics to an apparent holding strategy in their bid to carve out an Islamic state. **Update (26 August 2014)** – Cameroon security sources disclosed late Monday that hundreds of Nigerian soldiers have fled across the border into neighboring Cameroon over fears of further attacks by Boko Haram militants. According to a police officer stationed in the region, “some 500 Nigerian soldiers took refuge in the far north of Cameroon on Sunday,” adding that the troops had fought the militants before withdrawing as they were out-numbered. They reportedly spent the evening at a Fotokol customs post. Nigerian officials in Abuja however have denied

the reports that nearly 500 soldiers had crossed into Cameroon, adding that the move was a “tactical maneuver” as they pursued the militants.

- **24 August 2014** – In a new video made public on Sunday, Boko Haram’s leader has claimed to have created an Islamic caliphate in a northeastern Nigerian town that was seized by the militant group earlier



this month. While the declaration is in line with the militant group’s desire of carving out an Islamic state in Nigeria, the timing of the announcement was likely prompted by the recent attention garnered by Islamic State (IS) militants in Iraq and Syria. In the new 52-minute video, Abubakar Shekau states “thanks be to Allah who gave victory to our brethren in the town of Gwoza and made it part of the Islamic caliphate,” adding that Gwoza, in Borno state, now has “nothing to do with Nigeria.” Earlier this month, the United Nations humanitarian office (OCHA)

confirmed reports that Gwoza was under the control of the rebel group. While Boko Haram is now believed to be in control of other areas near Gwoza, in southern Borno, as well as large swathes of territory in northern Borno state and at least one town in neighboring Yobe state, mapping the precise areas that have fallen under the control of the Islamist militants will be nearly impossible as there are few humanitarian workers on the ground in the northeast, travel to the region remains dangerous and there is poor mobile phone coverage. Boko Haram’s declaration of a caliphate in Nigeria has drawn comparisons with a similar declaration that was made by IS in June. While Boko Haram desires to create an Islamic state, it is believed that this premature declaration is a move to remain relevant in the region and in competition with IS. Recent gains achieved by IS likely inspired Shekau’s statement, as the militant group has garnered international headlines in recent months by seizing parts of Iraq and Syria in a brutal onslaught. While global focus had initially been placed on Boko Haram’s widely condemned kidnapping of more than 200 schoolgirls in April, in recent months, much of that focus has shifted to the territorial ambitions of IS despite Boko Haram continuing to carry out nearly daily attacks in northeastern Nigeria. Furthermore, in the wake of a video released last week depicting the brutal murder of American journalist James Foley, the United States has described IS as the strongest-ever Islamist threat with its “apocalyptic end of days” ideology, a statement that has further taken attention away from the Nigerian-based militant group, which in comparison, is believed to be a modestly-funded uprising that is composed of poor youths with minimal tactical training. Although Boko Haram has carried out a brutal five-year campaign, by evoking a Nigerian caliphate, Shekau is likely attempting to remain relevant and to raise his own profile in the region, rather than submit to like-minded extremists in the Middle East. While Shekau has on previous occasions expressed support for IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, and has congratulated IS on its advances in Iraq and Syria, this new video shows no indication from Shekau that he was associating himself with Baghdadi. Furthermore, there is no evidence that the two groups have been working together. Instead, it is likely that the Nigerian militant’s latest video is an attempt at reminding regional governments and the West that Boko Haram is as powerful a threat as IS. Boko Haram’s declaration of an Islamic caliphate is inline with the militant group’s ideology, as it has long voiced a desire to create a strict Islamic state within mainly Muslim northern Nigeria. The timing of the announcement however is directly influenced by IS’ activities. Boko Haram had previously declared that they should overrun the entire country prior to declaring an Islamic

republic, a belief that was reflected in the manner in which they expanded their area of activity. In the wake of a state of emergency in the states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe, coupled with the launch of a military offensive, Boko Haram had slowly moved out of the city centers, and into the rural areas of northeastern Nigeria. They have also successfully carried out attacks in Abuja this year and have crossed over the porous border into Cameroon. However in recent weeks, Boko Haram has taken over a number of towns in Borno state, a move that demonstrates a shift from hit-and-run tactics to an apparent holding strategy. It is likely that after watching IS' gains in Iraq and Syria, and the impact this has had on the group's global attention, Boko Haram's plan of achieving its goal are now taking on a more gradual approach. What remains evident is that Boko Haram is closely monitoring IS operations, its gains, what impact it has on the global stage and how the militant group may be able to benefit. Boko Haram is likely to continue to mirror IS moves in the coming months, continuing to take over areas of northeastern Nigeria and possibly releasing brutal videos similar to those released by IS.

- Striking public sector doctors in Nigeria confirmed Sunday that they will suspend a nearly two-month strike in order to help combat the Ebola outbreak. At an emergency session held over the weekend, union leaders told their members that they would resume work on Monday. A statement released by the striking National Medical Association (NMA) Union disclosed "all medical and dental doctors are hereby directed to resume duty at their working posts with effect from 8:00AM (0700 GMT) of Monday 25th August 2014," noting that its delegates had "resolved to suspend the strike action in the interest of urgent national emergencies," specifically citing the "threats posed by the outreach of the Ebola virus." The NMA has come under intense pressure in recent weeks to end the work stoppage since the first Ebola case was confirmed in Lagos in late July. While NMA chief Kayode Obembe had announced earlier this month that the strike would end, he later faced a revolt from his deputies in the union and was subsequently forced to withdraw his comments. Despite the NMA returning to work, negotiations with the federal government over their grievances will continue. The NMA launched a strike on 1 July over pay and working conditions. While Nigeria has recorded 14 Ebola cases, including five deaths, a number far less than Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, which have each seen hundreds of deaths from the virus, Nigeria's cases have so far been handled by private sector medical workers who have been working closely with experts from the US Centers for Disease Control, the WHO and medical aid groups. Many now believe that Nigeria's public hospitals also require to be operational in order to guard against disaster in the event of a surge in infections.
- **23 August 2014** – On Saturday, a spokesman confirmed that thirty-five Nigerian police officers deployed to a training academy in the remote northeastern region of the country are missing after Boko Haram militants launched an attack on the facility earlier in the week. According to sources, the militants attacked the academy, which is located outside the town of Gwoza, on Wednesday. A statement released by national police spokesman Emmanuel Ojukwu disclosed, "thirty-five policemen who are still missing from the facility as a result of the latest attack are being searched for with very promising prospects of locating them." The spokesman also noted that it is currently too soon to speculate whether the officers have been taken hostage by the militants, who have kidnapped hundreds of people over the past five years, adding that some may have been killed while others may have ran to safety during the onslaught but have not yet reported their whereabouts. An investigation into the incident is ongoing. The town was seized by the militant group earlier this month however the Nigerian military has stated that it is preparing to launch an offensive to retake the town in Borno state. The crisis in northern Nigeria has intensified in recent month. Boko Haram is now believed to be in control of large swathes of area in the state of Borno, which is the group's historic stronghold, as well as at least one town in neighboring Yobe state. While President

Goodluck Jonathan declared a state of emergency in northeastern Nigeria in May, with the military launching a massive operation to flush out the militants, which showed some initial success, the army's top officials have failed to sustain the pressure, effectively allowing Boko Haram to regroup and recapture a number of towns and key roads in the region.

- A local government official in Adamawa disclosed that scores of gunmen stormed the town of Madagali on Saturday, forcing out soldiers and taking over government buildings. According to local government chairman Maina Ularamu, the insurgents advanced from Gwoza, which is located some 23 kilometers (14 miles) away, and took several villages located in between. Troops were reportedly also chased out of the town of Gula, which is the administrative headquarters for the region and which is located 20 kilometers away from Madagali.
- **22 August 2014** – On Friday, Nigerian officials confirmed that two more people had tested positive for Ebola, brining the total number of confirmed cases of the deadly virus in the county to 14, including five deaths. During a news conference in Abuja, Health Minister Onyebuchi Chukwu disclosed “Nigeria has now recorded the first two cases of Ebola Virus Disease in secondary contacts of the index case,” adding “the two patients are spouses of primary contacts of the Liberian-American,” referring to Patrick Sawyer who died on July 25 while in quarantine. According to the health minister, the two new cases are the husband and the wife of two primary contacts who died of the disease. Nigeria currently has 213 people under surveillance. Six of the 213 are under watch in the eastern city of Enugu, where a nurse who had treated Mr Sawyer travelled before falling sick. She has since returned to Lagos and remains in hospital under quarantine. Two doctors and two nurses who treated Mr Sawyer, as well as an official from the West African regional bloc ECOWAS who picked him up from the airport have died from the disease. Five people confirmed to have the virus have been “successfully managed and discharged.” The World Health Organization on Tuesday disclosed that it was encouraged by the situation in Nigeria as all of the confirmed cases have come from a single chain of transmission.
- **21 August 2014** – Witnesses and local officials reported Thursday that Boko Haram militants have seized control of a town in northeastern Nigeria in what appears to be the latest bid by the militant group to expand its control over territory in the crisis-hit region. Several residents who fled the Boko Haram assault on Buni Yadi in Yobe state have reported that the assault began late last month, with the insurgents ultimately taking over the main government building. On the ground sources have reported that militants have reportedly raised their flag above the government building and have carried out a number of summary executions, including the killing of two people who were caught smoking cigarettes. Residents have also reported that the militants, who massacred dozens of students at a boarding school in Buni Yadi in February, have set up roadblocks and that they have robbed several people as they attempted to flee. While Abdullahi Bego, the spokesman for Yobe's Governor Ibrahim Geidam, was unable to confirm the executions and robberies, he did disclose that there currently is “...no military in Buni Yadi and locals say that Boko Haram come and go as they please,” adding that many people have fled the town and are now seeking shelter in the state capital Damaturu. The United Nations has confirmed that in the past several weeks, Boko Haram have seized control of the towns of Damboa and Gwoza, both of which are located in Borno state. There are indications that the Nigerian military retook Damboa earlier this month however details remain unclear. While the militant group has in the past tended to use hit-and run attacks as a form of terrifying local residents, the recent seizure of these towns clearly suggests a significant shift in strategy, which appears to be more inline with their stated goal of carving out a strict Islamic state in northeastern Nigeria.

- **20 August 2014** – Dozens of Nigerian soldiers have refused to deploy for an upcoming offensive against Boko Haram militants, stating that they will not adhere to military orders until they receive better equipment and weaponry. On Wednesday, a number of Nigerian troops revealed that they had been ordered to move out of their barracks in the northeastern city of Maiduguri towards the Gwoza area of Borno state, where the insurgents have reportedly seized parts of the territory. One soldier disclosed, “we have vowed not to move one inch until our superiors provide us with all necessary weapons to effectively confront and dislodge Boko Haram, who have far better arms.” The troops have indicated that they have set up a camp on the outskirts of Maiduguri. While Defense Ministry spokesman Chris Olukolade indicted Wednesday that there was no mutiny in Borno, stating that Nigerian soldiers “are too disciplined and patriotic to indulge in this dangerous offence,” he did not categorically deny that some of the troops had refused to follow military orders, stating only that any such move by soldiers must be “properly tried in a military court” before it can be classified as a mutiny. Although the Defense Ministry has repeatedly claimed that “no soldier has been sent on any mission without being armed,” over the past several months, a number of Nigerian soldiers have come forward, stating that the ill-equipped forces were being gunned down by Islamist fighters who were equipped with heavy firepower. Some officials and independent experts have backed these accusations, noting that Boko Haram fighters are better armed than Nigerian troops. One such official is Borno state Governor Kashim Shettima, who was fiercely criticized by the military after he made a similar statement in February. Residents in towns raided by the Islamist militants have also reported that the insurgents are often armed with rocket-propelled grenades and anti-aircraft weapons mounted on trucks and that in some cases they have armored personnel carriers. In contrast, Nigerian soldiers have at times reportedly lacking ammunition for their AK-47 rifles and have been sent out to the bushlands to fight the militants without basic communication equipment. Earlier this month, several military wives staged a protest at the gate of a military base in Maiduguri in an attempt to stop their husbands from deploying to Gwoza until they were properly equipped. President Goodluck Jonathan recently requested that Nigerian lawmakers approve a US \$1 billion foreign loan that would be utilized to upgrade the capacity of the military. While parliament did not vote on the bill, as it was announced a day before summer recess, many see the President’s request as a tact acknowledgement that his military is being out-matched by the militants.
- **19 August 2014** – Nigeria’s Health Minister Onyebuchi Chukwu confirmed Tuesday that a senior doctor, who treated Nigeria’s first Ebola patient, has died, bringing the death toll in Africa’s most populous country to five. A statement released by the health minister revealed that the doctor was “the most senior who participated in the management of the first Ebola patient.” Liberian-American Patrick Sawyer, 40, died in a Lagos hospital on July 25, five days after arriving at the city’s airport from the Liberian capital, Monrovia. Despite being visibly unwell, it took Nigerian officials twenty-four hours before deciding to quarantine him. The four other deaths include two medical workers, a doctor and a nurse who had treated the Liberian finance ministry consultant, and an official from the West African regional bloc ECOWAS, who had picked Mr. Sawyer up from the airport. All of the cases have been localized in Lagos, which is Nigeria’s largest city with more than 20 million people. On Tuesday, officials at the World Health Organization (WHO) disclosed that Nigeria now has 15 cases of the Ebola virus. The global death toll from Ebola currently stands at 1,229, with the majority of cases reported in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.
- **18 August 2014** – Witnesses reported Monday that suspected Boko Haram gunmen killed ten people who had fled their homes to escape attacks by the insurgents. According to on the ground sources, residents of the village of Krenuwa had fled to nearby communities after a Boko Haram raid carried out last month left seven dead and saw the extremists raze a military camp, police station and several homes. On Sunday, about a dozen militants stormed the villages of Durwa and Maforo, in the Marte district, where some of the

residents had fled to seek refuge. One resident disclosed that the militants "...came on motorcycles and gathered people before singling out their victims who moved in from Krenuwa after it was attacked," adding "they shot six of them dead and slaughtered four." Sources have disclosed that after the attack in Durwa, where six residents were killed, the suspected Boko Haram gunmen stormed nearby Maforo, killing four residents. Last year, the Marte district was one of the areas where Boko Haram chased out the local government. This effectively forced President Goodluck Jonathan to declare a state of emergency in the region, which was followed by the launch of a military offensive aimed at ending the uprising. While a military response later reclaimed the territory, deadly Boko Haram raids on towns and villages in the area have continued with minimal reduction in intensity.

Senegal

No Travel Restrictions



Security Summary

On 29 August, Senegal's health minister confirmed that a Guinean in Senegal had been diagnosed with Ebola. On 22 August 2014, Senegal's government reclosed the border with Guinea in a bid to prevent the Ebola virus from entering the country.

MS Risk advises all travellers to avoid all outdoor rallies and demonstrations as they may turn violent. Although there are currently no travel restrictions for Senegal, MS Risk advises avoiding road travel in the Casamance region, to the west of Kolda. The Casamance region of south-western Senegal (between the southern border of Gambia and the northern border of Guinea-Bissau) remains affected by incidents involving armed separatist groups and banditry, particularly in the regions of Bignona and Sindian. There has been an increase in clashes between the Senegalese army and suspected elements of the armed separatist group Movement of the Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC). MS Risk advises against all road travel in the Casamance region to the west of Kolda, other than on the main road from Ziguinchor to Cap Skirring (which is often used by groups of tourists during daylight hours) and on the road north of the Guinea-Bissau/Senegal border, from Sao Domingos to Ziguinchor (N4 bis). If you travel on either of these roads, you should do so only during daylight hours and monitor the local security situation before travelling. Severe water shortages in Dakar have led to a number of demonstrations in the suburbs. Youths have blocked some roads with burning tyres and have clashed with police. MS Risk advises travellers to avoid all demonstrations and to leave any affected areas at the first sign that unrest may develop. There have been a number of deaths and injuries. There is currently an underlying threat from terrorism. Attacks could be indiscriminate, including in places frequented by expatriates and foreign travellers. With the ongoing French military intervention in Mali, authorities in Senegal have increased security in the capital city as well as along the border with Mali. MS Risk advises that al-Qaeda militants may cross the border into Senegal and they may target Western interests as well as foreigners.

On the Ground Reporting

- **29 August 2014** - Senegal on Friday confirmed the country's first Ebola case. During a news conference, Health Minister Awa Marie Coll Seck confirmed that the case was a Guinean national who had arrived from the neighboring West African country, where the deadly virus was first detected in March. According to the minister, Guinean health services had reported on Wednesday "the disappearance of a person infected with Ebola who reportedly travelled to Senegal." On the ground sources have disclosed that the patient is a

university student in Conakry who had disappeared three weeks ago from the Guinean capital. Authorities in Guinea and Senegal are currently trying to piece together where he went and all the people he encountered, with Senegal's minister disclosing, "plans were being reinforced to prevent the disease from spreading from this major case." According to officials, the man was immediately placed in quarantine. Senegal, which is a major hub for the business and aid community in West Africa had recently closed its border with Guinea in a bid to prevent the deadly virus from spreading. It is now the fifth West African country to be affected by the outbreak.

Domestic News

- **22 August 2014** – Despite the World Health Organization (WHO) indicating that travel bans do not work, especially if they prevent doctors from helping tackle the crisis, Senegal has become the latest country to seal its border with a West African neighbor in a bid to ward off the deadly Ebola virus. On Thursday, Senegal's interior ministry confirmed the government's decision to close the country's border with Guinea, a move that is part of intensifying efforts to contain the outbreak that has killed 1,350 people. The country has also banned flights and ships coming from Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, which are the three worst affected countries. As Senegal's capital Dakar, is a regional hub for West Africa, with many doctors and medical supplies arriving from Europe or the United States likely passing through the city prior to arriving in the affected countries, WHO officials are now concerned that this may impact efforts to contain the deadly virus. Gregory Harti, a WHO spokesman has disclosed that because the borders of the affected countries are porous, any such ban will likely be "impossible to enforce," adding "all you end up doing is restricting the kind of legitimate travel which is needed in order to continue to help these countries beat the Ebola outbreak." According to Mr Harti, what are needed are more doctors and officials to help trace those infected with Ebola, along with more mobile laboratories. This is not the first time that Senegalese officials have chosen to close the country's border with Guinea. Senegal first closed its border with the West African country in March, when the outbreak first began. The border however was reopened in May after the situation in Guinea seemed to have improved. Since May however the epidemic has again changed, with the number of cases in the country on the rise again.

Sierra Leone

Avoid all but essential travel to part(s) of the country



Security Summary

MS Risk currently advises all but essential travel to Sierra Leone, except for those who are involved in the direct response to the Ebola outbreak.

On 30 July, President Koroma declared a State of Public Emergency over the current Ebola outbreak. A number of measures have been implemented throughout the country. The government has closed all schools and banned public gatherings in Kailahun district. All vehicles and their passengers entering and leaving Kailahun district must undergo screening by the authorities at checkpoints. MS Risk advises all travellers to maintain strict standards of hygiene, avoid contact with symptomatic and deceased patients, avoid contact with live or dead animals and avoid consumption of bush meat.

There is currently no travel advisory for Sierra Leone. Violent incidents have taken place under cover of crowds in the streets of Freetown. Over the weekend of 25 – 27 July, there were reports of demonstrations and local disturbances occurring in Kenema and Freetown. These events were related to the Ebola outbreak. Further such demonstrations and disturbances cannot be ruled out. MS Risk advises all travellers to Sierra Leone to follow local news reports, be alert to any developments and void all large crowds and demonstrations as they may turn violent. There are also occasional small riots between rival groups of youths in the central and eastern areas of Freetown. If you encounter such an incident, you should leave the area immediately. There is a low threat from terrorism. There is a possibility that retaliatory attacks may be carried out in Sierra Leone. This is due to the country's participation in the intervention in Mali. During the rainy season, May to October, roads can become extremely difficult, even for off-road vehicles. On 9 August a bridge in the capital city of Freetown collapsed due to a landslide caused by heavy rain. At least six people were killed in the accident. MS Risk therefore advises all travellers in the country to exercise due caution when travelling by road throughout the season.

On the Ground Reporting

- **20 August 2014** – The Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone, which has left hundreds dead in the country, reportedly began with just one healer's claims to special powers. On Wednesday, health officials revealed that the outbreak need never have spread from Guinea, stating that a herbalist in the remote eastern border village of Sokoma was responsible for the deadly virus spreading to Sierra Leone. According to Mohamed Vandi, the top medical official in the hard-hit district of Kenema, the herbalist "...was claiming to have powers to heal Ebola. Cases from Guinea were crossing into Sierra Leone for treatment....She got infected

and died. During her funeral, women around the other towns got infected.” Since the start of this year, Ebola has killed more than 1,220 people since it emerged in southern Guinea. The virus spread first to Liberia and was confirmed in eastern Sierra Leone in May.

Domestic News

- **29 August 2014** – Sierra Leone’s President Ernest Bai Koroma dismissed his Health Minister Miatta Kargbo on Friday over her handling of the Ebola epidemic, which has killed more than 400 people in the West African country. A statement released by the president’s office indicated that Kargbo was removed in order “to create a conducive environment for efficient and effective handling of the Ebola outbreak.” According to the statement, her deputy Dr. Abubakarr Fofanah will replace her.
- **22 August 2014** – On Friday, Sierra Leone passed a law that will effectively see anyone harboring a victim of Ebola face a two-year jail term. After introducing the bill into parliament, Attorney General Frank Kargbo disclosed, “a maximum of two years jail term will be imposed on anyone caught hiding somebody who is believed to be infected with the deadly Ebola disease.” Officials at the WHO have indicated that they are increasingly becoming concerned that families are hiding infected loved ones in the belief they will be more comfortable dying at home. The new law comes as tensions over the outbreak have been on the rise as one majority leader of the house, Ibrahim Bundu, criticized neighboring countries, stating that they had abandoned Sierra Leone. In a statement, Mr Bundu indicated that officials in the country were “...appalled by the slow pace of response by some of our development partners and the abandonment and isolation from those we viewed and believed to be our biggest friends at sub-regional, regional and global levels.” He called the cancellation of flights and closure of borders in a bid to contain the virus “ugly developments” that were only leading to further isolation and causing businesses to shut down “at the time of greatest need.” He concluded by stating that officials in Sierra Leone would be reviewing the country’s relations with countries that the government felt had snubbed their cries for help “when life returns to normal.” Sierra Leone has been one of the hardest hit by the on-going Ebola epidemic, with 374 deaths and 907 cases since the outbreak began.

International Developments

- **26 August 2014** – On Tuesday, the UN warned of a looming food crisis in eastern Sierra Leone, which remains on lockdown since the country’s government announced a state of emergency. According to the UN’s Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), many of the deaths in Kailahun district, which is at the epicenter of the outbreak, have been amongst those aged 15 to 45. These deaths have lead to an acute shortage in farm labor. A recent FAO report written at the end of a 10-day study of the district concluded that a government ban on fairs and other public gatherings had “prevented farmers assembling in large numbers to undertake large scale farming,” adding “hikes in prices of consumer goods have made people feed on cassava, bush yam, banana and maize, with many farmers mortgaging their plantations to make ends meet.” The report further disclosed that there was a shortage of safe crop seeds in Kailahun, where the main export is coffee and cocoa. Sierra Leone has been hit hard by the outbreak, which has forced President Ernest Bai Koroma to appeal to the international community to help fill an US \$18 million shortfall in funding to battle the epidemic.



South Suite, Ragnall House, 18 Peel Road
Douglas, Isle of Man, IM1 4LZ

24 hr Global Contact: +44 207 754 3555
www.msrisk.com

Directors

S.J. Bingham, V.K. Prentice, P.O.J Tracy
Registered in the Isle of Man No. 007435V